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E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/29/2031
TAGS: [PINR](#) [SNAR](#) [KCRM](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [GY](#) [NS](#)
SUBJECT: (C/NF) GUYANA RESPONSE: DESI BOUTERSE AND SHAHEED
ROGER KHAN ACTIVITIES (C-AL6-00586)

REF: A. SECSTATE 92995
[1](#)B. PARAMARIBO 399
[1](#)C. GEORGETOWN 433
[1](#)D. 02 GEORGETOWN 1425

Classified By: Ambassador Roland W. Bullen
For reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (C) Post presents response to ref A. Noting that Shaheed "Roger" Khan is now in custody, Post takes this opportunity to mention other narco-criminals in Guyana eager to take over Khan's turf (see paras 14-17). As Minister of Home Affairs told Ambassador at their June 23 meeting: "When one star goes down, another one goes up."

[1](#)2. (S/NF) WHAT IS THE STATUS OF DESI BOUTERSE AND SHAHEED "ROGER" KHAN'S CURRENT RELATIONSHIP?

See previous SIMO reporting from Georgetown.

[1](#)3. (S/NF) HOW AND THROUGH WHAT MEANS DOES KHAN SUPPORT BOUTERSE? WHAT CAN OR DOES BOUTERSE OFFER IN RETURN?

No longer applicable.

[1](#)4. (S/NF) IS KHAN ACTIVE IN THE NARCOTICS TRADE, AND IF SO, WHICH DRUG TRAFFICKING GROUPS DOES HE DEAL WITH? DOES HE MAINTAIN TIES TO ANY OTHER CRIMINAL GROUPS, SUCH AS TERRORIST OR ORGANIZED CRIME GROUPS? WHAT FINANCES AND TECHNICAL CAPABILITY DOES HE HAVE AT HIS DISPOSAL?

Khan is a known drug trafficker who is believed to have ties with Colombian, Brazilian, and Venezuelan drug trafficking groups. Post does not know that Khan has ties to terrorist groups. Post does believe that Khan has ties to organized crime groups. Khan had access to large sums of money and could purchase whatever technical resources he needed. In 2002, for example, the Guyana Defence Force (GDF) detained Khan and two others (including a Guyana Police Force (GPF) officer) after finding them in possession of an armored vehicle, military arms and cell-phone surveillance equipment (ref D). The latter was a Cellular Protocol Analyzer model CSM 7806 manufactured by Smith-Meyers. Khan and the others were hastily released, the charges dropped, and the equipment returned.

[1](#)5. (S/NF) HOW OFTEN, AND WHERE, DOES BOUTERSE TRAVEL TO GUYANA? REF C INDICATES KHAN WAS LAST IN SURINAME IN JANUARY 2006, BUT ANALYSTS WOULD WELCOME INFORMATION ON HOW OFTEN HE TRAVELS TO SURINAME.

Post is unaware of any specific travel by Bouterse to Guyana. However, he has stated publicly that he travels to Guyana and Brazil despite the Interpol Red Notice against him.

16. (S) OTHER THAN THROUGH VIOLENCE, DO BOUTERSE OR KHAN HAVE ANY PLANS TO CREATE CIVIL UNREST THROUGH PROPAGANDA, RUMOR CAMPAIGNS AGAINST GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS OR POLITICAL LEADERS, OR STIRRING RACIAL OR SOCIOECONOMIC TENSIONS?

Yes. Khan has pursued a very active "public relations" campaign to paint himself as a Robin Hood figure, polarizing Guyanese opinion in the process (ref C). Through his intermediaries, this campaign continues even after his arrest:

- Khan claims that he fled to Suriname because Guyanese security forces were on a hunt to murder him.
- He accuses the USG, the GDF, GPF, and the PNC/R (Guyana's main opposition party) of colluding to remove the PPP government.
- He disseminated two secret recordings (there may be others) of Police Commissioner Winston Felix's conversations in a bid to force him out.
- He claims credit for bringing the 2002-03 crime wave in Guyana under control, meting out vigilante justice on behalf of the government.

Background: The ruling PPP (supported by Indo-Guyanese) distrusts the GPF and GDF because they are staffed and led mostly by Afro-Guyanese. In private conversations, PPP insiders reveal their paranoia about the security forces' connections to the political opposition and possible coup-plotting. In this environment, Khan finds an Indo-Guyanese audience willing to believe that he is their

protector against Afro-Guyanese criminals. Khan exploits this to stir racial tensions and discredit his enemies. But this influence has its limits. Recent demonstrations -- organized and bankrolled by Khan and his associates -- protesting the conduct of joint services raids on the properties of suspected criminals fizzled out quickly.

17. (C) HOW CAPABLE ARE THE SURINAMESE MILITARY AND POLICE TO QUARANTINE ANY DISTURBANCES? HOW MUCH INFLUENCE DOES BOUTERSE HAVE ON SURINAME'S MILITARY AND POLICE?

Post defers to Embassy Paramaribo's response.

18. (S) WHAT IS BOUTERSE'S RELATIONSHIP WITH THE RULING PEOPLE'S PROGRESSIVE PARTY (PPP) IN GUYANA? IS THE PPP SUPPORTING BOUTERSE'S EFFORTS?

Post is unaware of any relationship between Bouterse and the PPP. However, Bouterse has links with the PNC/R (ref B). As Home Affairs Minister Gail Teixeira recently told Ambassador: Bouterse's link with Buxton is a "key factor" for Guyana and Suriname because so much "revolves around him". (Note: Buxton, an Afro-Guyanese community about 10 miles east of Georgetown, is a hot-bed of criminal/militant activity. Desi Bouterse's son Dino organized a Surinamese soccer team's trip to Buxton a few years ago. It is believed that the team bus carried weapons to Buxton.)

19. (S) WILL EITHER GUYANA OR VENEZUELA GRANT BOUTERSE ASYLUM OR PROVIDE HIM WITH OTHER SUPPORT? IF SO, WHY WOULD THEY DO SO?

Post does not believe that Guyana would grant Bouterse asylum or provide him with other support.

110. (S) DOES BOUTERSE HAVE TIES TO ANY OTHER GOVERNMENTS THAT MAY CONSIDER OFFERING HIM ASYLUM OR OTHER SUPPORT?

Post defers to Embassy Paramaribo's response.

111. (C) WHAT IS KHAN'S ABILITY TO HELP DESTABILIZE THE

GUYANESE GOVERNMENT AND/OR THE ELECTIONS?

While active in Guyana, destabilizing elections did not seem to be a priority for Khan. Keeping a pliable PPP in power through a successful re-election suited his interests. However, even in custody Khan could potentially cause great embarrassment to -- or even bring down -- Guyana's government by revealing his links with the PPP and the skeletons in its closet.

¶12. (S/NF) IS THERE EVIDENCE, BEYOND POSSIBLE CONJECTURE, THAT KHAN ENJOYS SOME LEVEL OF POLITICAL PROTECTION FROM SENIOR OFFICIALS OF THE GUYANESE GOVERNMENT AND, IF SO, FROM WHOM?

Khan did enjoy political protection from GoG officials at the highest levels. At a minimum, former Home Affairs Minister Ronald Gajraj and long-time Head of the Presidential Secretariat Dr. Roger Luncheon collaborated with Khan.

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Gajraj (now Guyana's High Commissioner to India) orchestrated Guyana's "death squads" in 2002-03 -- certainly in close collaboration with Khan. Luncheon (President Jagdeo's deputy) is known to have intervened and ordered the authorities to release Khan and return his equipment as described in para 4. Also, eyewitnesses say they have seen Khan leaving the President's office.

Ever since Khan's May 2006 indictment in the U.S. on drug charges, the GoG has tried assiduously to distance itself from him.

¶13. (S/NF) WHAT ARE THE GUYANESE GOVERNMENT'S OPTIONS AND CAPABILITIES, ASSUMING THERE IS THE POLITICAL WILL TO DO SO, FOR, AT A MINIMUM, CONTAINING KHAN AND HIS ACTIVITIES OR, AT BEST, SUCCESSFULLY APPREHENDING AND PROSECUTING HIM?

Even in the unlikely event that the GoG and the security forces were on the same page and determined to go after narco-criminals, their ability to do so is extremely limited. The narco-criminals have entourages of highly-trained, well-armed ex-tactical squad members at their disposal. The GPF cannot compete with them. In addition, corruption and tip-offs are so rampant that the GPF and GDF rarely enjoy the element of surprise.

Even if these challenges were overcome, a successful arrest would stand little chance of progressing through the judicial system. Guyana has not convicted a single drug trafficker of note.

WAITING IN THE WINGS

¶14. (C) Khan was the brashiest of Guyana's narco-criminals, but he was by no means the only one. Others will certainly try to fill the void left by Khan's departure from the local scene. Two leading candidates are Bramhanand (Alt: Bramhand, Brammanand) Nandalall and Clayton Hutson (DOB:31-Dec-64). Older than the upstart Khan, they have been active in drug trafficking for many years. Nandalall is the "godfather" of organized crime in Guyana. Khan and Hutson both worked for him before setting them up their own criminal organizations.

¶15. (C) Ambassador met with Home Affairs Teixeira June 23 to discuss Khan and other matters. Teixeira was eager to share her views on the risk and instability that Khan's capture causes in Guyana. She guesses Hutson might become the next kingpin. She said that Nandalall is keeping very quiet and is rumored to be cooperating with the U.S.

¶16. (C) Teixeira warned that Khan's departure from the scene opens the door for the criminal situation to become more political -- she said it will no longer be about "just narcotics, but about ethnicity" as well. She fears that if

Hutson uses this opportunity to assume a larger role, then he and his accomplices will pose a serious political threat with the help of drug and gun trafficking.

¶17. (C) COMMENT. GoG leaders were comfortable with Khan because they thought he was on their side; the possibility of a new kingpin allied with the political opposition makes them very nervous indeed. Other sources indicate that Nandalall is more likely than Hutson to take over as Guyana's number one narco-criminal. Judging from Teixeira's tone, Hutson leans politically towards the PNC/R. Nandalall's political stance is uncertain, but it is telling that the PPP government has never gone after him during his many years of criminal activity. END COMMENT.
BULLEN